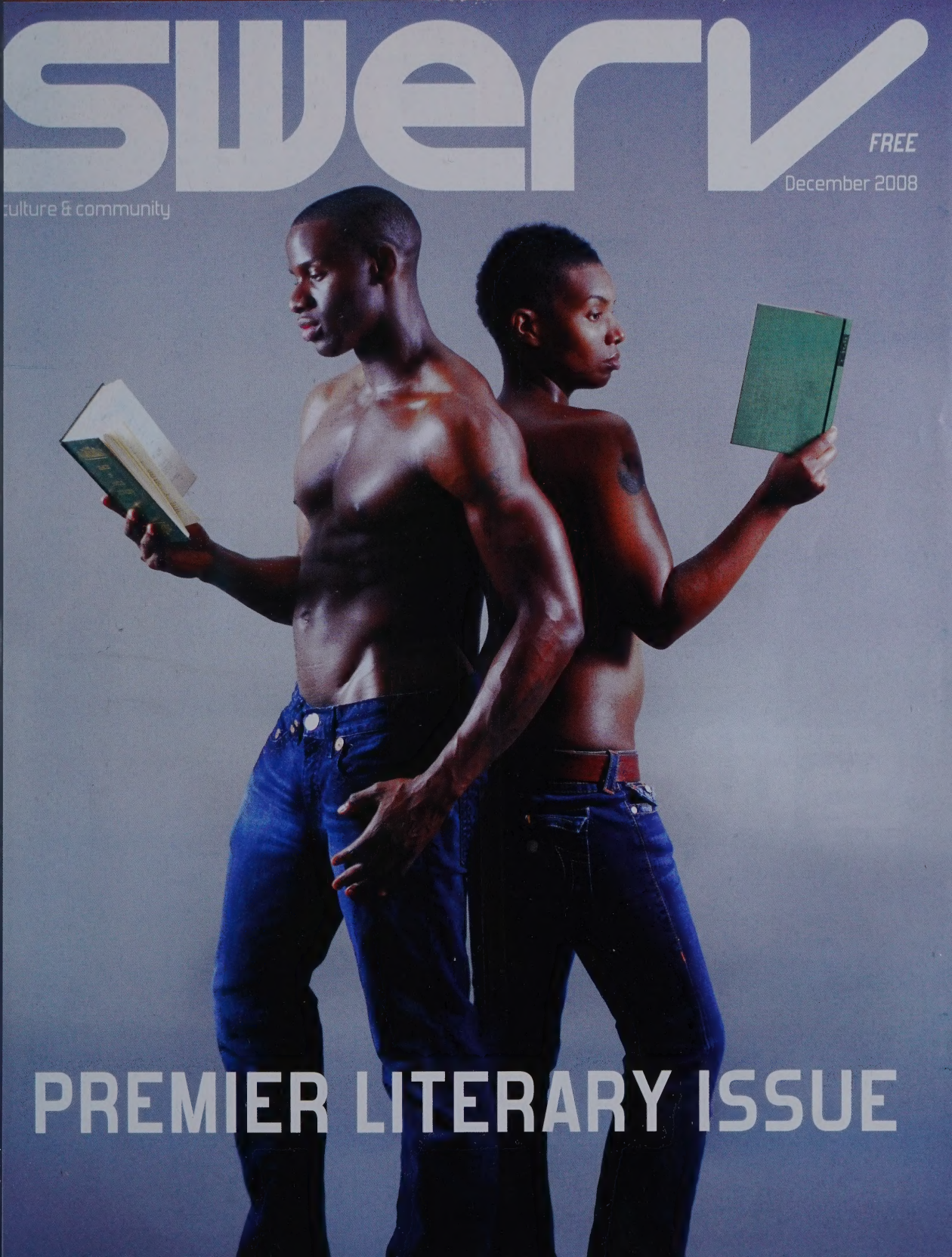
swerv

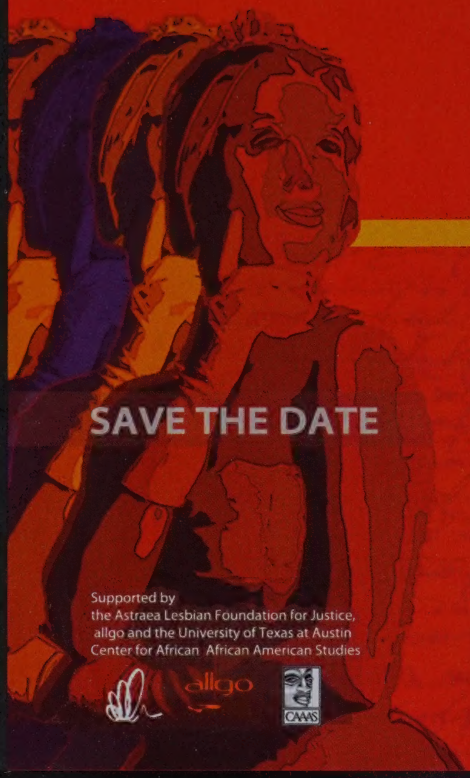
culture & community

FREE

December 2008



PREMIER LITERARY ISSUE



fire & ink

A WRITERS FESTIVAL FOR GLBT PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT

SAVE THE DATE

Fire & Ink III: Cotillion

Writers and readers and lovers of the work of LGBTQ writers of African descent take note

Shake out your finest words.
Get ready to shimmy 'til your line breaks.

Fire & Ink III: Cotillion is almost here!
October 8-11, 2009
Austin, Texas

Find out more at:
2009.fireandink.org

Supported by
the Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice,
allgo and the University of Texas at Austin
Center for African African American Studies

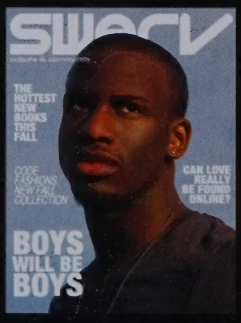
allgo

CAAAS

Don't Miss an Issue of

swerv

Visit www.SWERVmag.com to find out where to get your free copy and to subscribe!


swerv
THE HOTTEST NEW BOOKS THIS FALL
CODE FASHIONS NEW FALL COLLECTION
CAN LOVE REALLY BE FOUND ONLINE?
BOYS WILL BE BOYS

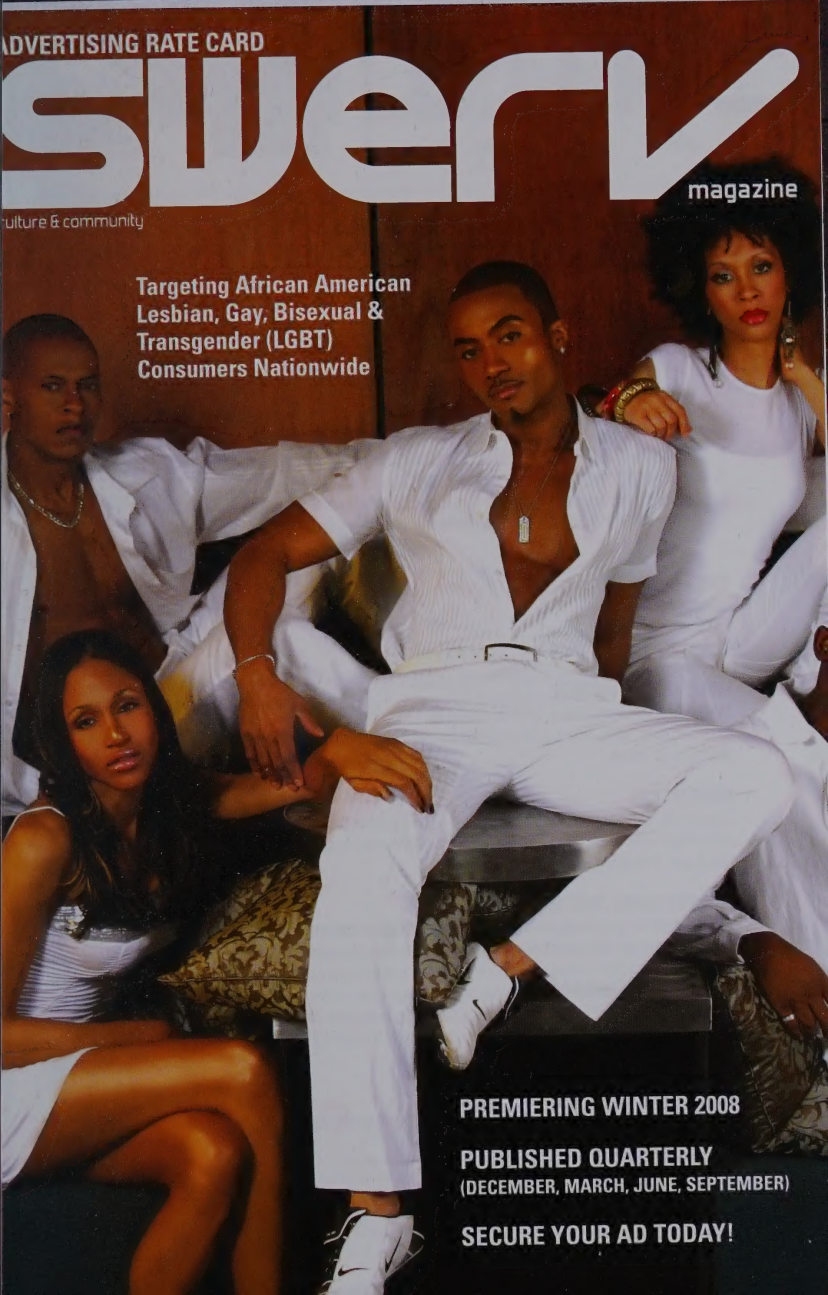
ADVERTISING RATE CARD

swerv

magazine

ulture & community

Targeting African American Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender (LGBT) Consumers Nationwide



PREMIERING WINTER 2008

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY
(DECEMBER, MARCH, JUNE, SEPTEMBER)

SECURE YOUR AD TODAY!

SWERV magazine

SWERV Magazine is a new national lifestyle periodical for the African American Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) community. Each issue will feature same-gender loving men and women in visual and performing arts, music, literature, film, television, sports, and politics. **SWERV Magazine** will also include sections on health and fitness, cuisine, news, and special events.

PREMIER DATE:

SWERV Magazine will be published on a quarterly basis, premiering December 2008.

DISTRIBUTION:

A circulation of 30,000 copies will be distributed to a projected readership of 150,000 (5 readers per booklet). Copies will be available, **FREE** of charge, at nightclubs, bookstores, health clubs, community-based organizations, and other locations frequented by members of the Black LGBT community throughout the United States.

THE AUDIENCE:

AGE

Target consumers range from 18 to 45 years in age.

HOUSEHOLD INCOME

LGBT African Americans tend to make more money than their heterosexual counterparts. 65% have a household income of $35,000 or more with over 17% making $65,000 or more.*

EDUCATION

Over 89% of LGBT African Americans have achieved some form of college education with 40% receiving undergraduate degrees and over 17% obtaining post-graduate (master's, doctorate) degrees.*

ADVERTISING AND BRAND LOYALTY

Four out of 10 gay consumers prefer to purchase products from companies that advertise in gay and lesbian media, quality and value being equal.**

PURCHASING BEHAVIOR

Nearly 55% of LGBT consumers choose to do business with companies that they know have a commitment to diversity and equal treatment of employees, versus 34% of non-gays.**

MEDIA CONSUMPTION

Roughly 67% of LGBT individuals say they read independent and alternative newspapers compared to 50% of non-gays.**

** Data based on 1999 DC Black Pride survey*

*** Harris Interactive / Witeck-Combs LGBT Market Research*

Photo courtesy of The Ummah Fund - Photography by Almo Studios

swerv MAGAZINE ADVERTISING FORM

Name _____

Company _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

E-Mail _____

Web Address _____

QUANTITY	COST	EDITIONS (Winter, Spring, Summer, Fall)
_____ Back Cover	_____	_____
_____ Inside Front Cover	_____	_____
_____ Inside Back Cover	_____	_____
_____ Center Spread	_____	_____
_____ Full Page	_____	_____
_____ Half Page	_____	_____
_____ Quarter Page	_____	_____

Total: _____

DEADLINES

All camera ready art and electronic submissions are due by **November 1, 2008** (Winter), **February 2, 2009** (Spring), **May 1, 2009** (Summer), **August 1, 2008** (Fall).

PAYMENT

By Credit Card, go to **www.SWERVMAG.com**. Make checks payable to:
Brownstar Enterprises (EIN#: 13-4339177)
Mail to: Brownstar Enterprises
P.O. Box 1249
Washington, DC 20013-1249

AD ACCEPTANCE POLICY

SWERV Magazine reserves the right to reject any advertisement, in whole or in part, which in our sole and absolute discretion is inappropriate or offensive to our readers or fails to satisfy our publication standards. All ads are accepted on the basis that the advertiser is authorized to publish the entire contents, and that no ad submitted violates a patent or copyright. **SWERV Magazine** is not responsible for quality of ads that do not comply with production guidelines.

WAIVER OF LIABILITY:

I, _____ as an Officer or

Agent of _____ accept full responsibility and assume all liability for claims or suits based upon contents or subject matter of the above mentioned advertisement.
Vendor Signature: _____

Date_____/_____/_____

ADVERTISING RATES

Ad Type	1x	2x	4x
Back Cover	$5,000	$4,800	$4,600
Center Spread	$5,000	$4,800	$4,600
2 Page Spread	$4,500	$4,250	$4,000
Inside Covers	$4,000	$3,800	$3,600
Full Page	$3,000	$2,800	$2,600
Half Page	$2,000	$1,900	$1,800
Quarter Page	$1,500	$1,400	$1,300

Ask about our special Nonprofit Rates!

ADVERTISEMENT SPECIFICATIONS

Trim Size	8.375" x 10.875"
Full Page	8.125" x 10.625"
Half Page Horz	8.125" x 5.1875"
Half Page Vert	3.9375" x 10.625"
Quarter Page	3.9375" x 5.1875"
2 Page Spread	17" x 11.125" *

*Bleeds require an extra .25" around all sides. All artwork should have a "safety zone" of .25" in from the trim dimensions. Email for design templates. *Dimension Includes Bleeds.*

PUBLISHING SCHEDULE

Issue Date	Close-Registration	Close-Artwork	Street Date
Winter	10/24/08	11/1/08	12/1/08
Spring	1/19/09	2/2/09	3/2/09
Summer	4/23/09	5/1/09	6/1/09
Fall	7/27/09	8/3/09	9/1/09

ELECTRONIC SUBMISSIONS

We accept TIFF files, high-resolution JPEGs, or PDF files with all fonts and images embedded without compression. All files/images must be 300 dpi. Do not use low-res JPEGs from the internet in ads. Color ads must use the CMYK mode. Ads should be e-mailed to: **ads@SWERVmag.com** and named "SWERV(your company name).jpeg/tif/pdf." Files may be compressed using Stuffit or WinZip. We accept CD-ROM. E-mail for ad production rates.

PAYMENT

By credit card, go to **www.SWERVMAG.com/advertise.html**.

Make checks payable to:
Brownstar Enterprises (EIN#: 13-4339177)

Mail to:
Brownstar Enterprises
P.O. Box 1249
Washington, DC 20013-1249

CONTACT:

Jamil Fletcher - ads@swervmag.com
Phone: 202.375.4239; Fax 866.559.7236

AGENCY COMMISSION

Recognized agencies may receive a 15% commission on placed ads.

National Advertising Representative: Rivendell Media,1248 Route 22 West, Mountainside, NJ 07092; 908-232-2021

swerv magazine

P.O. Box 1249
Washington, DC 20013-1249

www.SWERVmag.com
ads@swervmag.com

BROWNSTAR
ENTERPRISES

BROWNSTAR ENTERPRISES
PO BOX 1249
WASHINGTON, DC
20013 - 1249

November 28, 2008

Zami, Inc.
P.O. Box 2502
Decatur, GA 30031

Dear Friends,

Brownstar Enterprises proudly announces the launching of **SWERV Magazine**, a national periodical that celebrates the culture and community of African American Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) people. This national publication will be published on a quarterly basis, premiering this Winter in December. See the enclosed for a copy of the premiere issue.

In an effort to ensure representation from the many nonprofit organizations that support the African American LGBT community, Brownstar Enterprises is offering special discounted advertising rates for registered charitable entities as follows.

Ad Type	Regular Rates	Discounted Rates
Full Page	$2,600 (4x) - $3,000 (1x)	$1,500
Half Page	$1,800 (4x) - $2,000 (1x)	$1,000

SWERV Magazine will feature same-gender loving men and women in visual and performing arts, music, literature, film, television, sports, politics, and more. **SWERV Magazine** will also include sections on health and fitness, cuisine, news, and special events.

SWERV Magazine offers a unique opportunity for your organization to reach this often overlooked demographic within the LGBT community. Whether to galvanize the masses around political issues or to raise awareness about particular health concerns such as HIV/AIDS and breast cancer, **SWERV Magazine** is your vehicle to connect with African American LGBT people around the country.

Act now to secure your advertising presence in what is sure to become the voice of the African American LGBT community. See below for our publishing schedule.

Issue Date	Close Registration	Close Artwork	Street Date
Spring	1/19/09	2/2/09	3/2/09
Summer	4/23/09	5/1/09	6/1/09
Fall	7/27/09	8/3/09	9/1/09

Go to our website at www.SWERVMAG.com for further information. Feel free to contact me directly at (202) 375-4239 or ads@swervmag.com should you have any questions. I look forward speaking with you to explore your level of interest in **SWERV Magazine**.

Sincerely,

Jamil A. Fletcher
Co-Publisher

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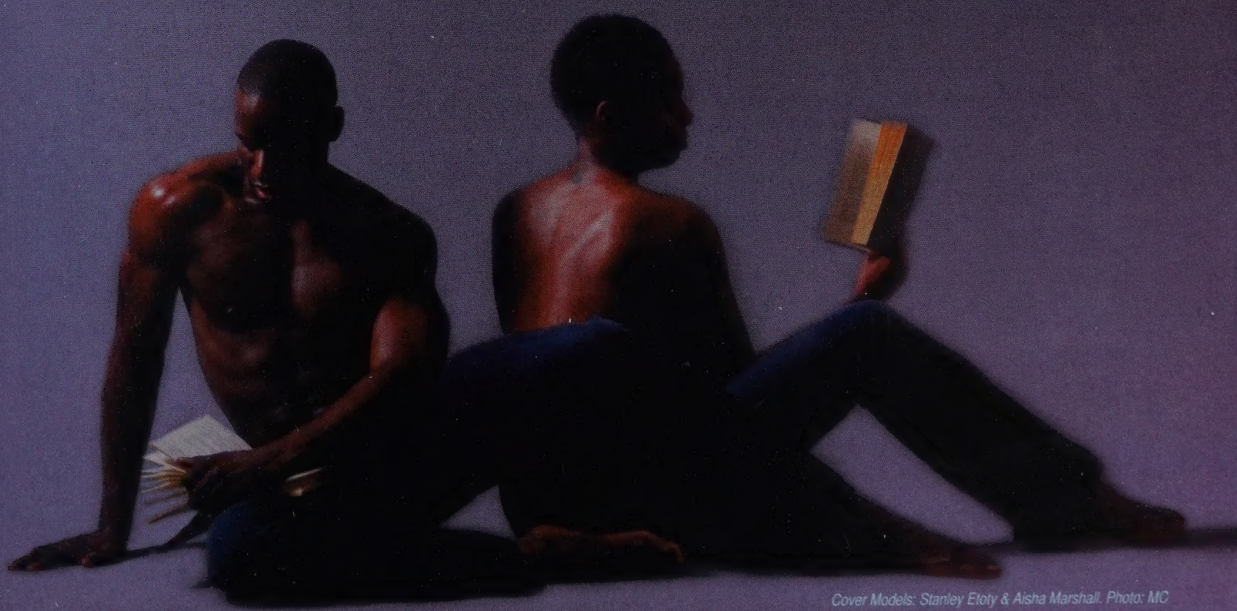

Cover Models: Stanley Etoty & Aisha Marshall. Photo: MC

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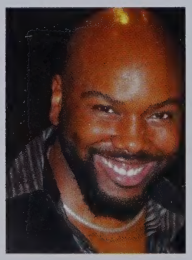
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF/CO-PUBLISHER/
ART DIRECTOR

JAMIL FLETCHER
ADVERTISING SALES/
CO-PUBLISHER

LISA C. MOORE
COPY EDITOR

NATIONAL ADVERTISING REPRESENTATIVE: RIVENDALE MEDIA
1248 ROUTE 22 WEST
MOUNTAINSIDE, NJ 07092; 908-232-2021

contributors



L. Michael Gipson is a Washington, D.C.-based cultural critic, community health planner and award-winning youth advocate. His sociopolitical essays have been published in two anthologies, including *Poverty & Race in America: The Emerging Agendas* (Chester Hartman, ed.). As a cultural critic and music journalist, Gipson's work has appeared in *Clik, Pulse, Arise, Pride, Amplify, Urban Dialect, Port of Harlem* and *Creative Loafing ATL*. He is editor and columnist at www.SoulTracks.com and heard weekly as "Cornfed" on *The Dave Brown Radio Show*.

Frank J. Oldham, Jr. is the President & CEO of the National Association of People with AIDS. Find your local testing site at the National Association of People with AIDS web site, www.napwa.org, or at www.hivtest.org.

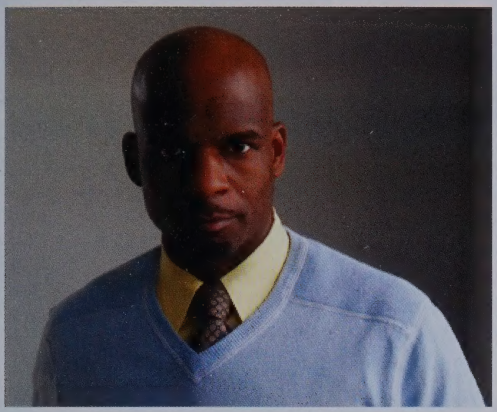
Kevin Anderson, a Los Angeles native, is an Intervention Coordinator for St. Hope Foundation's Fusion program in Houston, TX, where he now resides. Anderson is the founder and lead facilitator for Brother2Brother Gathering and Book Club for same-gender-loving brothers to discuss issues important to the community, while strengthening each other through fellowship and laughter. Anderson is also a founding member of Purpose Driven Lives, Inc., dedicated to enhancing the lives of those in need through fundraising and education.

Clarence* J. Fluker writes about what is on his heart and what is going on in the world around it. At times, that is an awful lot but he has managed to present it clearly as a playwright in his one-man show *LOVE*, as a contributor to the anthology *Spirited*, as an editor of *ARISE Magazine* and a guest writer for *IMPACT Monthly*. Words make him dance and dancing makes him happy.

Justin B. Smith, 28, has been involved in gay activism since 1999. A U.S. Air Force veteran, Smith was born and raised in Silver Spring, MD, and now lives in Baltimore. He has worked with and for gay organizations such as the National Black Justice Coalition, Human Rights Campaign, Equality Maryland, and Us Helping Us, People Into Living Incorporated. Smith is currently in school pursuing a degree in journalism.

Photo: Don Harris

From the Publishers



Inspiration can come from a multitude of sources; a song, a sermon, a speech or a story. It's astonishing how a simple word or thought is capable of giving birth to new concepts and ideas. Inspiration can even come from things that aren't so encouraging. As an African American I know all too well how oppressive situations can mobilize many to the aid of others or one's self. As a writer, artist and publisher, one of the things that inspires me most is my community.

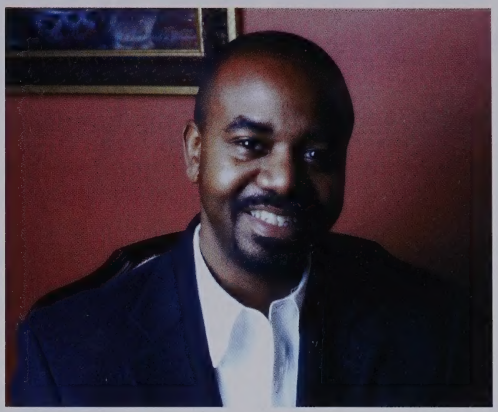
I belong to two, often conflicting, groups. I am black and I am same-gender-loving. There is never a moment in my life when I feel one identity is more dominant than the other, but we live in a time when some people feel it's easier to assimilate into hetero-normal culture than stand up for what is in our hearts.

Although same-gender-loving people have a distinctly different journey, some feel sexuality does not warrant celebration, and therefore remain private about their orientation. Still, there are a few strong voices calling out from the masses, eager to document stories, songs and visions that speak to both cultures. Many times, those inspired voices go unheard by individuals who don't believe they're as legitimate as the voices of our straight counterparts. This magazine will hear those voices and raise them higher.

In my travels as an author, I've come across people who do amazing things: writers, musicians, singers, artists, photographers, activists—the list goes on. Meeting these people has been a blessing, and the camaraderie and collaborations that have resulted have motivated us all. Still, we've all struggled, at times, to reach the eyes and ears of the people we're speaking to, and about. SWERV is dedicating its pages to help these voices be heard.

It's my hope that SWERV will inspire those who may have given up on an idea or dream because it was linked to their sexual orientation. I intend to help those who are already doing great things in and for our community, to help them reach more, eager eyes. With that, we present to you our Premier Literary Issue. Please let us know what you think. E-mail us at info@swervmag.com and let us know how we're doing, who we need to feature and how you've been inspired.

Michael-Christopher
Editor-in-Chief



To swerve is to turn aside from a straight course. SWERV magazine represents a turn from the usual, a movement against the grain, an alternative to the norm. SWERV represents the voice of African-American members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community, a population that often turns aside from both mainstream African Americans and the larger LGBT community.

The challenge to have one's voice heard is even more complicated when from within subcultures that are often marginalized. To be black in America is one thing, but to also be openly gay, lesbian, transgender or bisexual is another. While the recent election of the first African-American president is undoubtedly historic, it does not dismiss the challenges black people face in this country. Whether it is poverty, unemployment, incarceration, illiteracy or HIV/AIDS infections, blacks are disproportionately affected by the ills of our society.

The recent votes against gay marriage clearly indicate that this country's society, for all of its greatness, has yet to truly come to terms with homosexuality. Laws are still on the books that prevent LGBT people from openly serving in the military, and the level of targeted hate crimes against gays and lesbians continues to persist. Clearly, there is still work to be done.

SWERV magazine celebrates both the culture and community of this unique demographic of African-American lesbian, gay, transgender and bisexual people. Our pages will introduce you to extraordinary people doing phenomenal things in the worlds of literature, music, fashion, health, politics, sports and beyond.

Welcome to the world of SWERV.

Jamil Fletcher
Co-publisher

CARRYING THE WORDS

by Clarence* J. Fluker

Register Your Book Club with SWERV at info@SWERVmag.com

On the landscape of the written word there lies a unique space. This space, though small in magnitude, is magnificent and gives life and light to the pleasure, power and pain of the human experience. It has been ever-growing since its conception and continues to organically evolve. It is this unique space that represents the history, past and present, of black lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender writing and publishing.

Beginning in the 1920s with the Harlem Renaissance-spawned magazine, *Fire!*, to the works of James Baldwin, Audre Lorde, June Jordan, Essex Hemphill, E. Lynn Harris and James Earl Hardy, black same-gender-loving people have been telling their stories despite attempts to silence their voices. Until more recent times, a novel about two men or two women in an intimate or sexual relationship would not have been tolerated. Code and heavy implication were common literary devices used to mask the truth.

Thankfully, we are at a point in time in our history where we are free to express our love, lust and longings in most any way we choose. The way has been paved so that we are able to educate and entertain not only ourselves, but also our heterosexual family and friends, through the power of publishing and writing—telling our own stories, in our own voices.

Twenty-first Century technology and the Internet have played a huge role in granting almost anyone the opportunity and power to publish their own work without the approval or backing of a major publishing company or literary agent. In the past ten years or so, the floodgates have burst open, the result being a tidal wave of literature that bathes us in stories, language and traditions of our shared community and humanity. No longer are we limited to being constructed and defined by heterosexual and/or non-people of color depictions of what it is to be black and same-gender-loving. Gone are the days of the one-dimensional black gay character. Today, we live and write our own narratives that tell of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender African Americans that are as varied as the shades of our skin.

Yet as the wave of literature grows wider and deeper, there is still very little space on many bookshelves for stories of same-gender love. Despite a growing awareness, and because of bigotry and other obstacles, a good number of LGBT authors have had to go it alone and publish their own works, and many of these authors have persevered and managed to build a gorgeous body of writing. Others have found a home in smaller publishers. Although they are not household names like Harris and Hardy, these authors are just as deserving of their praise and notoriety.

As you read about the following writers, some new, some familiar, realize that these are the current carriers of the word; those responsible for continuing our written legacy, keeping and growing our unique space on the literary landscape. Get to know these authors and support them, as they are our shared experiences and voices. Read on and get carried away!

LAURINDA D. BROWN

"I write about life...not lifestyles. With each literary offering, I try very hard to be different and present situations to which we all can relate. I also try to educate as well as entertain new readers so they can dismiss the initial fear of reading literature that represents a different segment of our culture. I stopped aiming to please everyone with my writing because not everyone is going to like what I have to say or how I choose to say it. My ultimate goal with any piece is to leave the reader wanting more."

Fire & Brimstone
Undercover
Walk Like a Man
Strapped
The Highest Price for Passion
Purple Panties (contributor)
The Cat House

www.myspace.com/laurindadbrown

G. WINSTON JAMES

"Trebor Healey, a Lambda Literary Award-winning author, said of my work, 'James explores in vivid, raw, disturbing detail the gritty realities of gay black life. These are stories that need to be heard, and that shockingly even 40 years into the gay movement are still being silenced, ignored or overlooked.'

"I am inspired by the words that go unspoken in our conversations, and believe as Lauryn Hill does that 'fantasy is what people want, but reality is what they need.' For that reason my work deals very unapologetically with sex and sexuality, identity and all the complexities that accompany them.

"My goals as a writer are to be original in my approaches and to leave readers with questions about themselves and the world around them."

Lyric
The Damaged Good
Voices Rising (co-editor)
Spirited (co-editor)
Shaming the Devil (forthcoming)

www.gwinstonjames.com

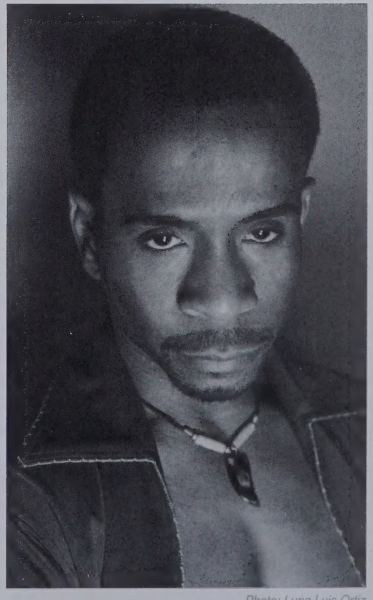
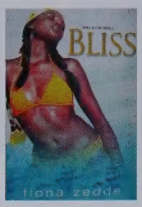
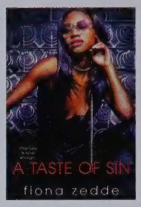
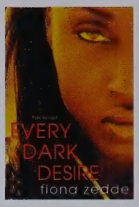


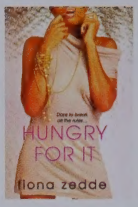
Photo: Luna Luis Ortiz

FIONA ZEDDE









"I hope that I tell stories people like me can relate to, stories that speak to an experience that a lot of fiction out there does not—or at least did not until very recently. And that experience is that of an immigrant, lesbian woman working at tying two sometimes clashing cultures together in a way that makes sense and makes for a happy and ecstatic life. I want my writing to show that. Stylistically, my fiction is a mixture of the old-fashioned (in terms of diction and theme) and the visceral. By that, I mean my work is heavily emotional. It digs into the heart of my characters and (hopefully) calls out emotion from the reader as well. I want it to be poetic (about flowers and rain and the breeze) but I also want it to feel very raw.

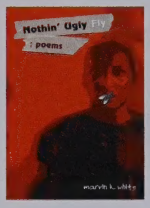
"My purpose in writing has always been to tell the truth about the lives of (some) lesbian women. And that truth is tied to my goal of wanting to connect with other women through the stories I create."

Bliss
A Taste of Sin
Every Dark Desire
Hungry For It

www.fionazedde.com

MARVIN K. WHITE

Author of the Lambda Literary Award-nominated collections of poetry *last rights* and *nothin' ugly fly*, is a poet, performer, playwright, visual artist as well as a community arts organizer. His poetry has been anthologized in *The Road Before Us: 100 Black Gay Poets; My Brother's Keeper; Gents, Bad Boys and Barbarians: New Gay Writing, Things Shaped in Passing; Sojourner: Writing in the Age of AIDS; Bum Rush the Page; Role Call;* and *Think Again;* as well as other local and national publications. A former member of the critically acclaimed Pomo Afro Homos, he has led creative arts and writing workshops from inner city elementary schools to youth centers for runaway kids to black gay youth support groups. White holds a fellowship in the national African-American poetry organization, Cave Canem; sits on the board of Fire & Ink, a national black LGBT writers organization; and is co-founder of B/GLAM (Black Gay Letters and Arts Movement), a Bay Area, California, organization whose goal is to preserve, present and incubate black gay artistic expressions.



last rights
nothin' ugly fly
Our Name Be Witness (Spring 2009)

www.marvinkwhite.com

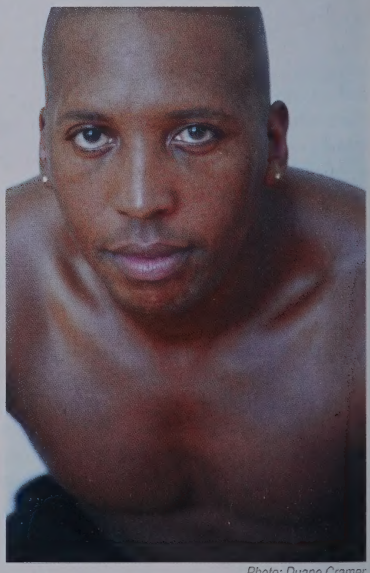


Photo: Duane Cramer

SAMIYA BASHIR

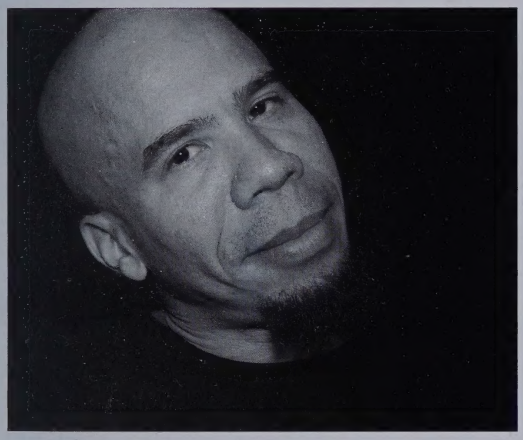
"My writing is about survival, resistance, healing and delicious joy. Poetry forces clarity. It cuts through the bullshit and layers of fatty tissue that we use to buffer us from actual feelings, observations, knowledge and experience. My work is my first and last love affair and poetry in particular has saved my life time and again; it's reminded me that my life is worth saving, so get off my ass and get to it. I'm very much such a Scorpio. Life. Death. Resurrection. Repeat. Shedding. Each book is like shedding a new skin, and coming out shiny, glistening, moist and new. Each new one a lesson in how to be light and flame in a way that doesn't burn."

Where the Apple Falls
Gospel (Spring 2009)

www.samiyabashir.com

Photo: Duane Cramer

STEVEN G. FULLWOOD



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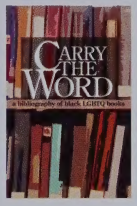


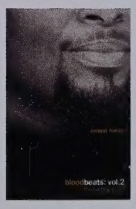
"My goal is to say something that is entertaining and 'true.' I write about whatever moves me. Although I primarily write about myself, I thrive on recording the voices of others. Essentially, I am telling one story—about you and me, what we do, and the sweet tension that keeps us loving and killing one another."

Funny
To Be Left with the Body (co-editor)
Carry the Word (co-editor)

www.stevengfullwood.com

ERNEST HARDY

Writing from a critical center that's melanin-based/feminist/pro-queer/unabashedly-leftist, L.A.-based writer Ernest Hardy pens essays, interviews and reviews whose subject matter ranges from underground hip-hop and American indie film to modern French cinema, from revealing interviews with Warren Beatty, Meshell NdegeOcello and Les Nubians to essays on gay rappers, queer rap audiences, and gay hip-hop porn, all pushing beyond clichés of the media-stoked "down-low" phenomenon. He's a Sundance Fellow whose work has appeared in *Rolling Stone*, *Vibe*, the *L.A. Times*, the *LA Weekly* and more.



Blood Beats: Vol. 1 / demos, remixes & extended versions
Blood Beats: Vol. 2 / the bootleg joints

www.ernesthardy.com

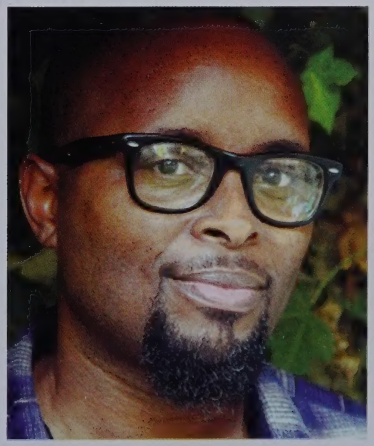


Photo: Alex Demyanenko

Photo: David E.F.P

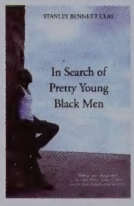
TIM'M T. WEST

"It is my aspiration to eventually publish an array of work steeped in the spirit and passion of those who understand, as Audre Lorde so poignantly suggested, that 'poetry is not a luxury.' When I wrote my first book, Red Dirt Revival, *back in 2003, I was doing so with the urgency of someone who found courage to speak my truth in order to save, not just my life, but that of others. Since that time, I've produced another book,* Flirting, *as well as another small collection,* BARE. *So many of my brothas and sistahs died attempting visibility and affirmation, not just as black people or LGBT people, but as people fully seeking full reverence of their humanity. Being an independent publisher has not been easy, but each book I've written is a gift you give to yourself and supports the creation of new work. There is certainly more to come... by me, and those brave comrades who'll seek my guidance in offering the world their voice."*

Red Dirt Revival
BARE
Flirting

www.reddirt.biz

STANLEY BENNETT CLAY



"How does one articulate the poetry of life? That is the welcomed conundrum that for parts of five decades as a published writer guides my pen to paper. There are so many stories out there to be told, but they are essentially rooted in one universal story that, I'm afraid, I'm not smart enough to thoroughly define.

"But I do know that it has something to do with being born, learning, living, loving, and leaving something of yourself as part of this great multicolored fabric, and then moving on to that next new unknown universe, made holy and eye-popping and infinitely simple because it IS new and unknown.

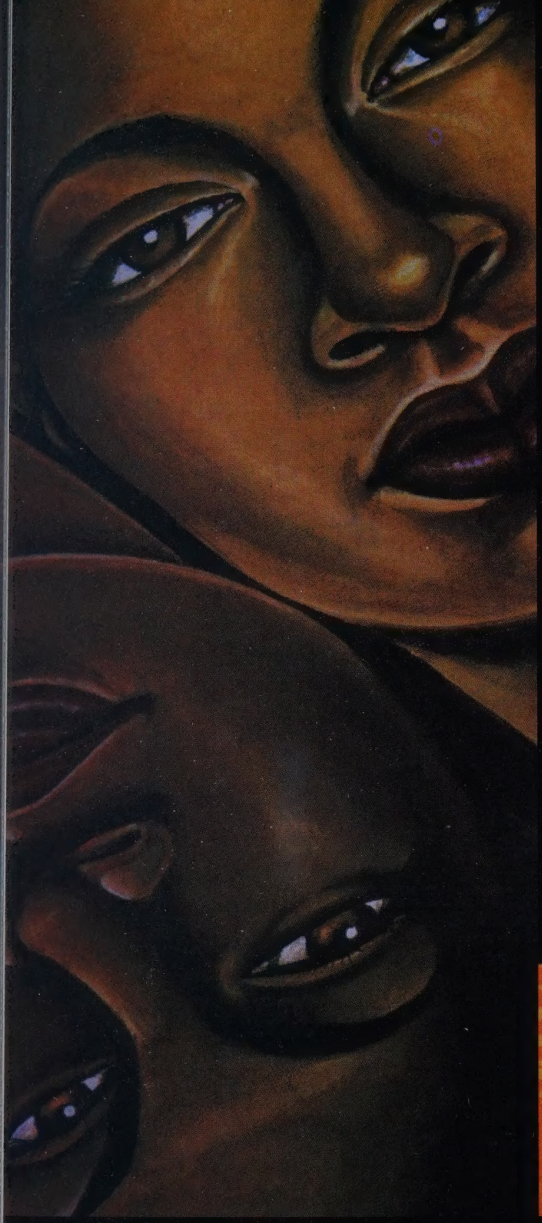
"It's all a wonderful tomorrow, new and Unknown. And with that prospect I write. I write with a poet's respect for coming upon things that educate me and I humbly articulate it with the best words that I can find, which often turn out to be the simplest words meticulously arranged to give reverence to the universe, which is giving reverence to God.

"I would never offer God dirty fruit. I will wash it and polish it and examine it and test it before I give it up to My Lord. When I write, I try and make sure my offering to Him is as worthy an offering that can be offered by one of His perfect imperfect sons. I want to honor him with the melody.

"Anyone can write a story. Few can sing it."

In Search of Pretty Young Black Men
Looker

www.myspace.com/stanleybennettclay



does your mama know?

An Anthology of Black Lesbian Coming Out Stories

Edited By Lisa C. Moore

By turns funny, passionate, angry and joyous, does your mama know? *reflects the complexity of emotions that accompany a black lesbian's coming out. These short stories, poems, interviews and essays—fiction and nonfiction—make up a powerful collection of original and new writing.*

"These voices [in *does your mama know?*] *are varied as are the tales they tell. Haitian, Jamerican, Afro-Canadian, biracial, Southern U.S., London by way of Barbados. Ages 14 to 90. ...It is extremely rare to see a book of any kind that reflects the diversity of black people in North America."*
—R. Erica Doyle,
Women in the Life *magazine*

"Few such voices have been raised to sing the history of African-American lesbians. Editor Lisa C. Moore noticed that and has set about to correct the omission, and she has done a masterful job of it."
—Dale Edwyna Smith,
Lesbian Review of Books

10TH ANNIVERSARY EXPANDED EDITION

WITH NEW STORIES, COMING FOR THE HOLIDAYS!

does your mama know?
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Coming Out Stories
Edited by Lisa C. Moore
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$19.95 paperback
RedBone Press
ISBN- 10 0-9786251-6-1
ISBN-13 978-0-9786251-6-0

REDBONE PRESS

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MICHELLE SEWELL

"I can not sing, or play an instrument, or draw a straight line, so I write. Writing is the most effective and consistent way that I have found to express my ideas and thoughts. Over the years, I have endeavored to develop a style that I hope feels authentic and accessible. It is not my intent to put the reader through the wringer to fully appreciate or grasp what I am saying. I consider it a compliment when a reader tells me that they feel like I am speaking to them directly and that I have captured some important life experience in a simple stanza or phrasing. I write because I don't want to do anything else."

Growing Up Girl (editor)
Just Like a Girl (editor)

www.growingupgirl.com

LISA C. MOORE

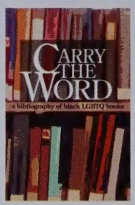


Photo: Ocean Morrisett

Lisa C. Moore is the founder and editor of RedBone Press, which publishes work celebrating the culture of black lesbians and gay men and promoting understanding between black gays and lesbians and the black mainstream. RedBone Press has 15 titles in print, including the new edition of *does your mama know? An Anthology of Black Lesbian Coming Out Stories*, as well as the best-selling book of essays by black gay men and lesbians on religion and spirituality, *Spirited*. Moore looks for work that is smart, engaging and innovative; as she says, "a manuscript has to grab me. I only publish what I fall in love with."

does your mama know? (editor)
Spirited (co-editor)
Carry the Word (co-editor)

www.redbonepress.com

KIMBERLY A. - THE LESBIAN GODDESS

"I felt that there were no real 'get to the heart of the matter' stories for women of color without being vulgar or tasteless. Erotica is about the journey and the desire to obtain that ecstasy by enticing and seducing, which is how I write. My goal is to provide women with outlets that provide them the fantasy (or reality) of reliving and/or desiring that moment; to go beyond the realm of women's comfort zones and normalcy by providing them with exotic adventures, unexplained pleasures and inexplicable desires."

Orchids: African-American Lesbian Erotica One-Night Stands
Orchids II: Reality or Fantasy

www.womenofchoice.com

NIKKI RASHAN

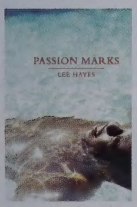
"I wrote Double Pleasure Double Pain *in an effort to reach out to women who are or know someone facing challenges similar to that of my main character, Kyla. In the story, Kyla finds herself attracted to another woman for the first time and must deal with both the excitement and confusion that comes with that experience. Some of the story is loosely based upon some of my own feelings coming out in my twenties; however, the major difference is that I've felt a connection to women my whole life while Kyla's experience is new.*

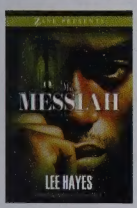
"My style of writing is conversational and easy to read; I once described it as a long, personal e-mail to a friend. The reader gets a firsthand look into Kyla's thoughts as she speaks with her friends and interacts with her new love interest. Responses from readers reveal that they are truly entertained by Kyla's humor and touched by the struggles she encounters. You Make Me Wanna, *the sequel, will be released in 2009."*

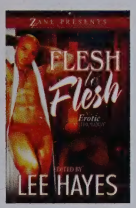
Double Pleasure Double Pain
You Make Me Wanna (2009)

www.nikkirashan.com

LEE HAYES





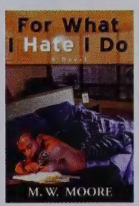


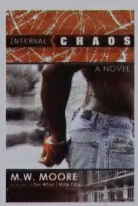
Lee Hayes understands and truly believes in the exceptional and profound power of words to delight, to heal, to entertain as well as to elicit change in lives of readers. It is his sincere hope that by reading his words that people will come to understand that actions yield real consequences which will affect their lives for better or for worse. He hopes that we all choose wisely. He also hopes that readers realize the innate value of their existence and that they dare dream to become more than they ever thought possible.

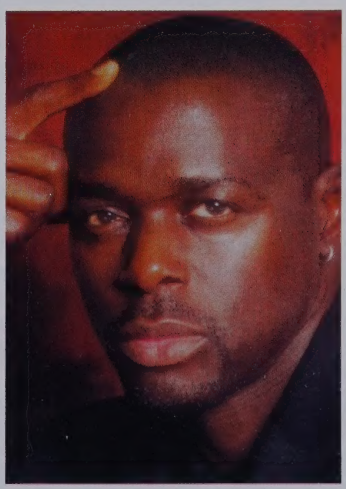
Passion Marks
A Deeper Blue: Passion Marks II
The Messiah
Flesh to Flesh: An Erotic Anthology (editor)

www.leehayes.info

M.W. MOORE





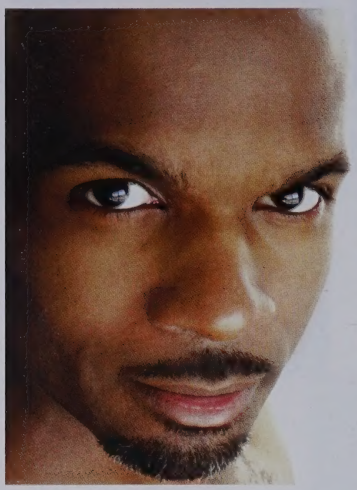


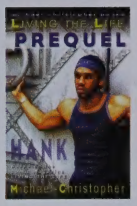
"I started writing as therapy. When I concluded writing to confront my behaviors, For What I Hate I Do *was [the result]. I did not want the book to be another typical novel about drugs and sex, but a fact-based novel that would confront and expose addictive behaviors. Now it's a movement. I was compelled to expose the ugly side of destructive behaviors because I once pretended those actions were normal. I self-medicated to become disconnected to the hurt, shame and damaged emotions I had inflicted on my bodily temple and on others. My work is an analogy unveiling the ugliness of destructive behaviors that deceived me with offers of pleasure without penalty. Even in this day of the DL lifestyle and HIV/AIDS crisis many still pretend that those issues don't exist, so I had to confront those terrors."*

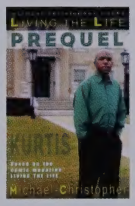
For What I Hate I Do
Internal Chaos

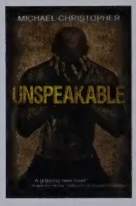
www.mwmoore.com

MICHAEL-CHRISTOPHER









"At an author's panel, host Stanley Bennett Clay once dubbed me 'the black gay romance novelist.' As someone who values relationships, I accepted the moniker with pride. After I started writing, designing and illustrating HIV prevention comics and campaigns in 2001, I decided to approach my writing from a slightly different angle. After examining the obstacles we set before us while seeking out and building relationships (sexual positioning, HIV status, masculinity, etc.), I took on the challenge of tearing down those walls at their foundation. It is my hope that my writing will assist readers in making more positive choices, treating their loved ones with the respect they deserve and coming into a place of genuine acceptance and love."

Living the Life Prequel - Hank
Living the Life Prequel - Kurtis
From Top to Bottom
Unspeakable

www.michael-christopher.com

The inspiration for this article came from a very ambitious and much needed publication that you may have noticed in prior pages. *Carry the Word: A Bibliography of Black LGBTQ Books*, was compiled by three literary torchbearers, Steven G. Fullwood, Reginald Harris and Lisa C. Moore. Harris is the author of *10 Tongues*; contributor to *Voices Rising: Celebrating 20 Years of Black Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Writing*, and is a Lambda Literary Award finalist. He, Fullwood and Moore also share another affiliation: They are all part of the leadership of Fire & Ink, an organization devoted to increasing the visibility and awareness of the works of LGBT writers of African descent and heritage.

More importantly, all proceeds from sales of *Carry the Word* will benefit the Fire & Ink organization and its conference, Fire & Ink III: Cotillion, to be held in Austin, TX, October 8-11, 2009. "Cotillion" will bring together hundreds of writers whose work spans the genres, including: fiction, nonfiction, poetry, screenwriting, playwriting, multimedia arts, performance arts. Attendees will include writers, editors, publishers, scholars, curators, audio and visual artists, students, teachers, thinkers, media professionals, readers and art lovers from diverse backgrounds and of diverse interests from around the country. For more information visit www.fireandink.org.

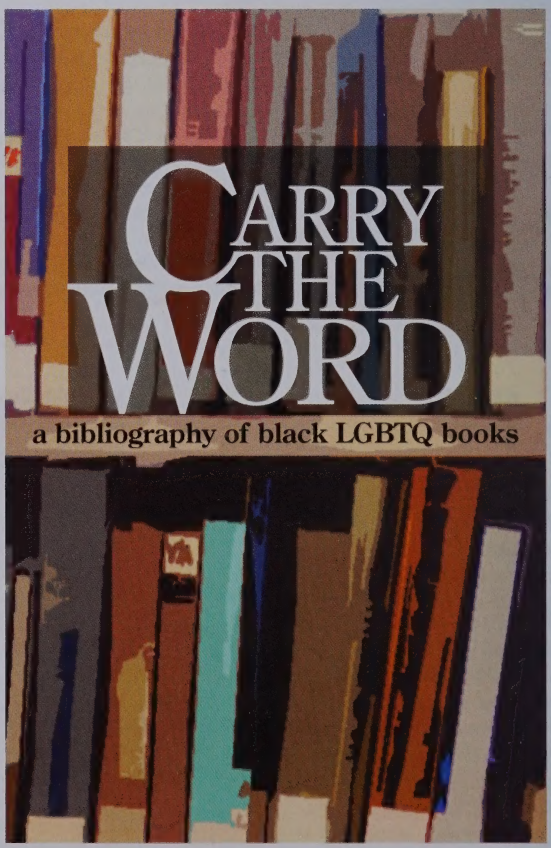
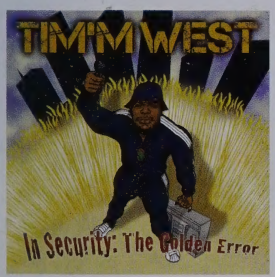


Photo: katina parker

TIM'M WEST
In Security: The Golden Error

by L. Michael Gipson



Tim'm T. West is red dirt born, but possesses the defensive swagger of cold Northern streets. His Timbs, hoodies and baggy jeans reek of stereotypes lived and feared; yet his undergraduate degree from Duke and double master's degrees from Stanford and the New School, respectively, belie every black male statistic ever imposed upon his brethren. He is ill with an incurable disease, but is a picturesque embodiment of athletic health and confidence. He is an out gay man whose truth, when spoken aloud, is usually met with disbelief and protestations; out gay men don't present like Mr. West, DL men do. He is a battle rapper. He has devoted his life to education and community uplift.

To say that Tim'm West is a man of deep contradictions is like saying Sarah Palin needs classes in geography and constitutional law. Yet with his cool demeanor it is easy to assume that this co-founder of the Deep Dickollective (D/DC), a pioneering gay hip-hop group, is a man who has made peace with his contradictions. Listening to Tim'm spit verse on "Walking Contradiction" off his third hip-hop project, *In Security: The Golden Error*, one could believe he has achieved an Obama-like zen. But between the swaggering poetic lines in *In Security* is a world of complicated, intense struggle for reconciliation of oppositional halves.

Tim'm's music represents the man; both typical and atypical of a brand we presume to know, but complex in a way we cannot know. Hip-hop and liberal black men resist single-dimensionality, straddling the progressive and traditional. They spit inspirations, but often fall into the oppressive, habitual privileges of old. That Tim'm, a leftist philosopher, chooses to tackle a medium whose repressive calls have failed lesser respondents proves a bold, if dicey move. Listening to Tim'm's artistic tensions begs the question: Can hip-hop's rules live harmoniously with philosophical social uplift? Consistent with "conscious rap," Tim'm's admirable work on *In Security* says "yes"...and "no." Even Tim'm gives in to temptation when taunted or to maintain tradition.

Appropriately, yesterday's pull is a running theme on *In Security*, particularly on knowing jams like "'80s babies" and "Old School." The Members Only era is also referenced through spare production and the privileging of lyric over beats, signatures of his previous works like *BlakkBoy Blue(s)*. Tim'm's impressive flow also reaches back to a time when relaxed rappers proved points with articulate cleverness rather than speed and grunts.

Using old way cadence, he spits new way consciousness. Rich with the genre's braggadocio, Tim'm's Kurtis Blow-baritone glides across complicated bass lines spitting liberation rhymes on everything from politics to same-sex lives. Like KRS-One—to whom Tim'm is often compared—progressive sentiments and educational lessons abound on soulful cuts like "Nappy." And he tackles obscure subjects with eloquence and sensitivity, such as on "Stutter," reflecting his speech-challenged childhood, and "Full Moon," about the love-challenged man he's become.

Yet, when cornered by an underwhelming, homophobic rapper who dissed Tim'm on a dismissible mixtape track, Tim'm's response on "Alone Again" is to pick up regressive tools of taunting humiliation in a decidedly testicular fashion. That Tim'm attacks his foe with intellectual quips in between fat jokes fails to remove the sting of his word choices. It is disheartening to hear a brotha who celebrates brothers of size in his love and poetry use the very thorns piercing those men's sides, even in defense of his wounded pride and ours. It is also very telling that I, a king-size brother, initially reacted with applause when hearing Tim'm competently defend himself and his community in ways respected by other men, other patriarchs. "You tell 'em, Tim'm; we ain't yo punks, bitch," I thought with a swelled chest, figuratively pounding my brother's back, ignoring how he chose to have ours.

Sobriety came through repetitive listening. Why was I proud of Tim'm's rebuttal? Because he proves we can brandish their weapons with the same dexterity? Because we can hurt them the same way they hurt us? Tim'm's art reveals truths about our heart, our struggle, our contradictions, our better selves and the work that remains. In its honesty, *In Security* leaves uneasy questions in its fist-pumping wake.

USE OF TRUVADA:

TRUVADA is a type of medicine called an HIV-1 (human immunodeficiency virus) nucleoside analog reverse transcriptase inhibitor and combines EMTRIVA® (emtricitabine) and VIREAD® (tenofovir disoproxil fumarate [DF]) in one pill. TRUVADA is always used with other anti-HIV-1 medicines to treat adults with HIV-1 infection.

TRUVADA should not be used with ATRIPLA® (efavirenz 600 mg/emtricitabine 200 mg/tenofovir DF 300 mg), VIREAD®, EMTRIVA®, Combivir® (lamivudine/zidovudine), Epivir® or Epivir-HBV® (lamivudine), Epzicom® (abacavir sulfate/lamivudine), or Trizivir® (abacavir sulfate/lamivudine/zidovudine).

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION:

Contact your healthcare provider right away if you experience any of the following side effects or conditions while taking TRUVADA:

- **Nausea, vomiting, unusual muscle pain, and/or weakness. These may be signs of a buildup of acid in the blood (lactic acidosis), which is a serious medical condition**
- **Light colored stools, dark colored urine, and/or if your skin or the whites of your eyes turn yellow. These may be signs of serious liver problems (hepatotoxicity), with liver enlargement (hepatomegaly), and fat in the liver (steatosis)**
- **If you have HIV-1 and hepatitis B virus (HBV) and stop taking TRUVADA, your liver disease may suddenly get worse. Your healthcare provider will monitor your condition for several months**
- If you have had kidney problems or take other medicines that can cause kidney problems, your healthcare provider should do regular blood tests to check your kidneys
- It is not known whether long-term use of TRUVADA causes damage to your bones. If you have had bone problems in the past, talk to your healthcare provider before taking TRUVADA

Changes in body fat have been seen in some people taking TRUVADA and other anti-HIV-1 medicines.

The most common side effects of the medicines in TRUVADA when taken with other anti-HIV-1 medicines are diarrhea, nausea, fatigue, sinusitis, upper respiratory tract infections, nasopharyngitis, headache, dizziness, depression, insomnia, abnormal dreams, and rash. Skin discoloration (spots and freckles) may also happen with TRUVADA.

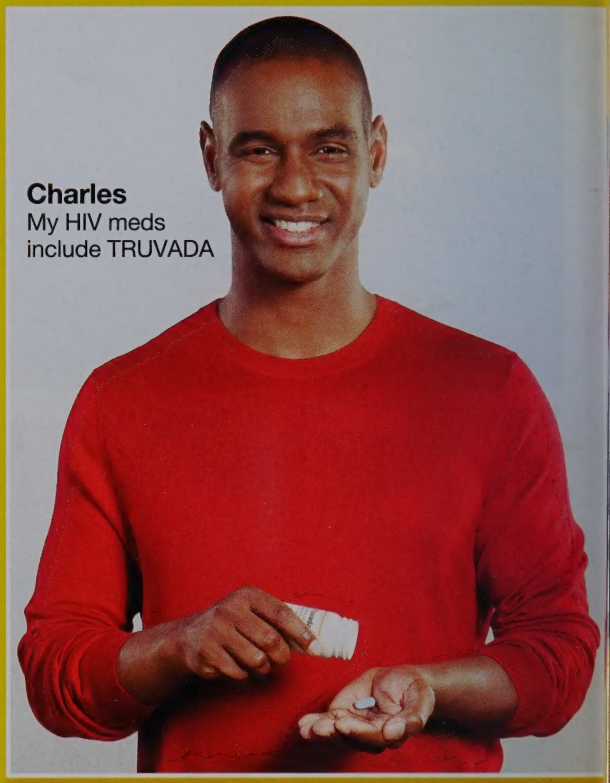
Discuss all medicines you take with your healthcare provider and be aware:

- Your healthcare provider may need to follow you more closely or adjust your therapy if you are taking Videx® or Videx® EC (didanosine), Reyataz® (atazanavir sulfate), or Kaletra® (lopinavir/ritonavir) with TRUVADA

Please see Patient Information on next page, including **"What is the most important information I should know about TRUVADA?"** in the Patient Information section.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

I feel positive



In combination with other antiretroviral agents for the treatment of HIV-1 infection in adults

References: 1. Based on data from PHAST retail monthly data; September 2005-January 2008; Wolters Kluwer Health. **2.** Truvada [prescribing information]. Foster City, CA: Gilead Sciences, Inc.; May 2008.

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GILEAD
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about my future.
TRUVADA helps make it possible.

#1 *prescribed* **HIV** *med by doctors*[1]

Individual results may vary.

With *once a day* TRUVADA for my HIV, I can plan for long-term success.

- Proven over the long term to reduce viral load to undetectable (<400 copies/mL) and increase CD4 cell count in 3 years of a clinical study*[2]
- Established long-term safety and tolerability*[2]

TRUVADA does not cure HIV-1 infection or prevent passing HIV-1 to others.

Ask your doctor about TRUVADA and go to www.TRUVADA.com.

Truvada®

200 mg emtricitabine-tenofovir disoproxil fumarate 300 mg

Think long term.* Starting now.

*Through 3 years in Gilead Study 934.[2]

Patient Information

TRUVADA® (tru-VAH-dah) tablets

Generic name: emtricitabine and tenofovir disoproxil fumarate
(em tri SIT uh bean and te NOE' fo veer
dye soe PROX il FYOU mar ate)

Read the Patient Information that comes with TRUVADA before you start taking it and each time you get a refill. There may be new information. This information does not take the place of talking to your healthcare provider about your medical condition or treatment. You should stay under a healthcare provider's care when taking TRUVADA. **Do not change or stop your medicine without first talking with your healthcare provider.** Talk to your healthcare provider or pharmacist if you have any questions about TRUVADA.

What is the most important information I should know about TRUVADA?

- **Some people who have taken medicine like TRUVADA (nucleoside analogs) have developed a serious condition called lactic acidosis** (build up of an acid in the blood). Lactic acidosis can be a medical emergency and may need to be treated in the hospital. **Call your healthcare provider right away if you get the following signs or symptoms of lactic acidosis.**
  - You feel very weak or tired.
  - You have unusual (not normal) muscle pain.
  - You have trouble breathing.
  - You have stomach pain with nausea and vomiting.
  - You feel cold, especially in your arms and legs.
  - You feel dizzy or lightheaded.
  - You have a fast or irregular heartbeat.
- **Some people who have taken medicines like TRUVADA have developed serious liver problems called hepatotoxicity,** with liver enlargement (hepatomegaly) and fat in the liver (steatosis). **Call your healthcare provider right away if you get the following signs or symptoms of liver problems.**
  - Your skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow (jaundice).
  - Your urine turns dark.
  - Your bowel movements (stools) turn light in color.
  - You don't feel like eating food for several days or longer.
  - You feel sick to your stomach (nausea).
  - You have lower stomach area (abdominal) pain.
- **You may be more likely to get lactic acidosis or liver problems** if you are female, very overweight (obese), or have been taking nucleoside analog medicines, like TRUVADA, for a long time.
- **If you are also infected with the Hepatitis B Virus (HBV),** you need close medical follow-up for several months after stopping treatment with TRUVADA. Follow-up includes medical exams and blood tests to check for HBV that could be getting worse. **Patients with Hepatitis B Virus infection, who take TRUVADA and then stop it, may get "flare-ups" of their hepatitis. A "flare-up" is when the disease suddenly returns in a worse way than before.**

What is TRUVADA?

TRUVADA is a type of medicine called an HIV-1 (human immunodeficiency virus) nucleoside analog reverse transcriptase inhibitor (NRTI). TRUVADA contains 2 medicines, EMTRIVA® (emtricitabine) and VIREAD® (tenofovir disoproxil fumarate, or tenofovir DF) combined in one pill. TRUVADA is always used with other anti-HIV-1 medicines to treat people with HIV-1 infection. TRUVADA is for adults age 18 and older. TRUVADA has not been studied in children under age 18 or adults over age 65.

HIV infection destroys $CD4^+$ T cells, which are important to the immune system. The immune system helps fight infection. After a large number of T cells are destroyed, acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) develops.

TRUVADA helps block HIV-1 reverse transcriptase, a chemical in your body (enzyme) that is needed for HIV-1 to multiply. TRUVADA lowers the amount of HIV-1 in the blood (viral load). TRUVADA may also help to increase the number of T cells ($CD4^+$ cells). Lowering the amount of HIV-1 in the blood lowers the chance of death or infections that happen when your immune system is weak (opportunistic infections).

TRUVADA does not cure HIV-1 infection or AIDS. The long-term effects of TRUVADA are not known at this time. People taking TRUVADA may still get opportunistic infections or other conditions that happen with HIV-1 infection. Opportunistic infections are infections that develop because the immune system is weak. Some of these conditions are pneumonia, herpes virus infections, and *Mycobacterium avium complex* (MAC) infection. **It is very important that you see your healthcare provider regularly while taking TRUVADA.**

TRUVADA does not lower your chance of passing HIV-1 to other people through sexual contact, sharing needles, or being exposed to your blood. For your health and the health of others, it is important to always practice safer sex by using a latex or polyurethane condom or other barrier to lower the chance of sexual contact with semen, vaginal secretions, or blood. Never use or share dirty needles.

Who should not take TRUVADA?

- Do not take TRUVADA if you are allergic to TRUVADA or any of its ingredients. The active ingredients of TRUVADA are emtricitabine and tenofovir DF. See the end of this leaflet for a complete list of ingredients.
- Do not take TRUVADA if you are already taking ATRIPLA®, Combivir (lamivudine/zidovudine), EMTRIVA, Epivir or Epivir-HBV (lamivudine), Epzicom (abacavir sulfate/lamivudine), Trizivir (abacavir sulfate/lamivudine/zidovudine), or VIREAD because these medicines contain the same or similar active ingredients.

What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking TRUVADA?

Tell your healthcare provider if you:

- **are pregnant or planning to become pregnant.** We do not know if TRUVADA can harm your unborn child. You and your healthcare provider will need to decide if TRUVADA is right for you. If you use TRUVADA while you are pregnant, talk to your healthcare provider about how you can be on the TRUVADA Antiviral Pregnancy Registry.
- **are breast-feeding.** You should not breast feed if you are HIV-positive because of the chance of passing the HIV virus to your baby. Also, it is not known if TRUVADA can pass into your breast milk and if it can harm your baby. If you are a woman who has or will have a baby, talk with your healthcare provider about the best way to feed your baby.
- **have kidney problems or are undergoing kidney dialysis treatment.**
- **have bone problems.**
- **have liver problems including Hepatitis B Virus infection.**

Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and non-prescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. Especially tell your healthcare provider if you take:

- Videx, Videx EC (didanosine). Tenofovir DF (a component of TRUVADA) may increase the amount of Videx in your blood. **You may need to be followed more carefully if you are taking TRUVADA and Videx together.** Also, the dose of didanosine may need to be reduced.
- Reyataz (atazanavir sulfate) or Kaletra (lopinavir/ritonavir). These medicines may increase the amount of tenofovir DF (a component of TRUVADA) in your blood, which could result in more side effects. You may need to be followed more carefully if you are taking TRUVADA and Reyataz or Kaletra together. TRUVADA may decrease the amount of Reyataz in your blood. If you are taking TRUVADA and Reyataz together, you should also be taking Norvir (ritonavir).

Keep a complete list of all the medicines that you take. Make a new list when medicines are added or stopped. Give copies of this list to all of your healthcare providers and pharmacist **every** time you visit your healthcare provider or fill a prescription.

How should I take TRUVADA?

- Take TRUVADA exactly as your healthcare provider prescribed it. Follow the directions from your healthcare provider, exactly as written on the label.

- The usual dose of TRUVADA is 1 tablet once a day. TRUVADA is always used with other anti-HIV-1 medicines. If you have kidney problems, you may need to take TRUVADA less often.
- TRUVADA may be taken with or without a meal. Food does not affect how TRUVADA works. Take TRUVADA at the same time each day.
- If you forget to take TRUVADA, take it as soon as you remember that day. **Do not** take more than 1 dose of TRUVADA in a day. **Do not** take 2 doses at the same time. Call your healthcare provider or pharmacist if you are not sure what to do. **It is important that you do not miss any doses of TRUVADA or your anti-HIV-1 medicines.**
- When your TRUVADA supply starts to run low, get more from your healthcare provider or pharmacy. This is very important because the amount of virus in your blood may increase if the medicine is stopped for even a short time. The virus may develop resistance to TRUVADA and become harder to treat.
- Do not change your dose or stop taking TRUVADA without first talking with your healthcare provider. Stay under a healthcare provider's care when taking TRUVADA.
- If you take too much TRUVADA, call your local poison control center or emergency room right away.

What should I avoid while taking TRUVADA?

- **Do not breast-feed.** See "What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking TRUVADA?"
- **Avoid doing things that can spread HIV infection** since TRUVADA does not stop you from passing the HIV infection to others.
  - **Do not share needles or other injection equipment.**
  - **Do not share personal items that can have blood or body fluids on them, like toothbrushes or razor blades.**
  - **Do not have any kind of sex without protection.** Always practice safer sex by using a latex or polyurethane condom or other barrier to reduce the chance of sexual contact with semen, vaginal secretions, or blood.
- ATRIPLA, Combivir (lamivudine/zidovudine), EMTRIVA, Epivir or Epivir-HBV (lamivudine), Epzicom (abacavir sulfate/lamivudine), Trizivir (abacavir sulfate/lamivudine/zidovudine), or VIREAD.

TRUVADA should not be used with these medicines.

What are the possible side effects of TRUVADA?

TRUVADA may cause the following serious side effects (see "What is the most important information I should know about TRUVADA?"):

- **Lactic acidosis** (buildup of an acid in the blood). Lactic acidosis can be a medical emergency and may need to be treated in the hospital. **Call your doctor right away if you get signs of lactic acidosis.** (See "What is the most important information I should know about TRUVADA?")
- **Serious liver problems (hepatotoxicity),** with liver enlargement (hepatomegaly) and fat in the liver (steatosis). Call your healthcare provider right away if you get any signs of liver problems. (See "What is the most important information I should know about TRUVADA?")
- **"Flare-ups" of Hepatitis B Virus infection,** in which the disease suddenly returns in a worse way than before, can occur if you stop taking TRUVADA. Your healthcare provider will monitor your condition for several months after stopping TRUVADA if you have both HIV-1 and HBV infection. TRUVADA is not approved for the treatment of Hepatitis B Virus infection.
- **Kidney problems.** If you have had kidney problems in the past or take other medicines that can cause kidney problems, your healthcare provider should do regular blood tests to check your kidneys.
- **Changes in bone mineral density (thinning bones).** It is not known whether long-term use of TRUVADA will cause damage to your bones. If you have had bone problems in the past, your healthcare provider may need to do tests to check your bone mineral density or may prescribe medicines to help your bone mineral density.

Other side effects with TRUVADA when used with other anti-HIV-1 medicines include:

- Changes in body fat have been seen in some patients taking TRUVADA and other anti-HIV-1 medicines. These changes may include increased amount of fat in the upper back and neck ("buffalo hump"), breast, and around the main part of your body (trunk). Loss of fat from the legs, arms and face may also happen. The cause and long term health effect of these conditions are not known at this time.

The most common side effects of EMTRIVA or VIREAD when used with other anti HIV-1 medicines are: diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, dizziness and headache. Additional side effects are stomach pain, indigestion, gas, inflammation of the pancreas, increased amylase, sleeping problems, abnormal dreams, weakness, pain, low blood phosphate, shortness of breath, increase liver enzymes, inflammation of the liver, allergic reaction, muscle problems and rash. Skin discoloration (small spots or freckles) may also happen with TRUVADA.

These are not all the side effects of TRUVADA. This list of side effects with TRUVADA is **not complete** at this time because TRUVADA is still being studied. If you have questions about side effects, ask your healthcare provider. Report any new or continuing symptoms to your healthcare provider right away. Your healthcare provider may be able to help you manage these side effects.

How do I store TRUVADA?

- **Keep TRUVADA and all other medicines out of reach of children.**
- Store TRUVADA at room temperature 77 °F (25 °C).
- Keep TRUVADA in its original container and keep the container tightly closed.
- Do not keep medicine that is out of date or that you no longer need. If you throw any medicines away make sure that children will not find them.

General information about TRUVADA:

Medicines are sometimes prescribed for conditions that are not mentioned in patient information leaflets. Do not use TRUVADA for a condition for which it was not prescribed. Do not give TRUVADA to other people, even if they have the same symptoms you have. It may harm them.

This leaflet summarizes the most important information about TRUVADA. If you would like more information, talk with your healthcare provider. You can ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for information about TRUVADA that is written for health professionals. For more information, you may also call 1-800-GILEAD-5 or access the TRUVADA website at www.TRUVADA.com.

Do not use TRUVADA if seal over bottle opening is broken or missing.

What are the ingredients of TRUVADA?

Active Ingredients: emtricitabine and tenofovir disoproxil fumarate

Inactive Ingredients: Croscarmellose sodium, lactose monohydrate, magnesium stearate, microcrystalline cellulose, and pregelatinized starch (gluten free). The tablets are coated with Opadry II Blue Y-30-10701 containing FD&C Blue #2 aluminum lake, hydroxypropyl methylcellulose 2910, lactose monohydrate, titanium dioxide, and triacetin.

Rx Only

May 2008

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GILEAD

GETTING STARTED

By Jamil Fletcher

As the new year approaches, many of us resolve to get in better shape. Whether you desire to look like a winner in your tight "athletic cut" T-shirts or to appear voluptuous in those hip-huggers, we all want to appear fit and confident. Starting a fitness program is usually a major hurdle to overcome. Here are a few tips to guide you through this process.

1. Consult your doctor

Be sure to consult your doctor before you jump into that killer workout program. Now may be a good time for you to get that annual physical you've been putting off. For those over 40 who either smoke, have high blood pressure, diabetes or other health issues, consulting with your doctor should be a necessity before you get that body moving.

2. Gauge your current fitness level

Your personal impression of your current fitness level may not jibe with reality. When was the last time you jogged a mile or participated in a high-octane aerobics class? If you can't recall, then perhaps you should test the waters before you lay out a program. Here are a few suggestions to get a feel for your current condition:

- How long does it take to walk or run a mile?
- How many push-ups can you do?
- Can you touch your toes when bending from a standing position?

3. Set realistic goals

Do you want to build muscle, lose weight or increase your endurance? For some, the goal is just to look good naked. Others may want to fit into those jeans they've been dying to wear, again. Perhaps you should choose a metric (waist, size, weight). Believe it or not, LL Cool J and Beyoncé did not get those bodies overnight. Achieving that kind of physique typically takes years of disciplined training and dieting. So be realistic about your goals.

4. Choose your activities

Your goals will guide your activities. Those looking to build those diesel muscles should hit the weights, hard! Those of you who are looking to shed a few pounds should increase your cardio activities. Check out your local gym to see what activities are best suited to help you achieve your goals.

5. Schedule your workout

We can all think of a million excuses to keep us from exercising. Get your planners out and schedule the best times for you to fit training into your weekly routine.

Now, **GET STARTED!**

"Fashion is about freedom of expression and individuality. There are no limits with what you can do with clothes. Clothes allow the outside world to get a glimpse of your personality...mood...interests. My designs help make that happen. When I'm designing and styling, I don't allow myself to be hindered by what the masses think. My designs have a classic look that never goes out of style. They are fun and sexy and make the person wearing them feel like they stand out in the crowd. CöD Fashions is all about helping you express your mood and personality." — Dwight Strickland, CöD Fashions

CRACKING THE CODE

CöD Fashions (pronounced "code") knows the code for fashion: C—creative trends, ö—original designs, D—distinctive styling. Providing men and women with that unique blend of urban functionality and couture sophistication, CöD designs clothes that fit every aspect of you: casual, club, after-five attire, loungewear and street couture. CöD is making strides to leave its mark on the world, making sure everyone knows the code for fashion.

Serving the Atlanta area for more than eight years, CöD Fashions was created by Dwight Strickland to meet the fashion needs of those who are bored with typical off-the-rack clothes. Discovered by Changing Faces Management, Inc., Strickland has been featured in more than 40 fashion and trade shows in Atlanta; Washington, D.C.; Philadelphia; Detroit; Charlotte, N.C.; and Miami. His designs and styling have appeared in several stage productions and independent films. Strickland has provided designs for dancers, models, photographers, and entertainers, and has worked with talents such as Nik Pace, Jonathan Plummer, Arrested Development and the cast of the film *Dirty Laundry* by Maurice Jamal.

Strickland, who resides in Atlanta, continues to provide his talents to various projects. He is currently working on after-five collections for men and women for release in 2009.

Navy wool blazer with metallic red lace detail, $450.00. Textured grey knit mock, $55.00. Grey wool slacks, $125.00. Grey wool fedora and white shirt, private collection.

Black and silver flapper cocktail dress, $175.00. Rhinestone jewelry, private collection.

Emerald green wool blazer with white
top-stitch detail, $425.00.
Black and white block shirt, $75.00.
Aristocrat silk scarf, $35.00.

Black and blue cocktail dress with mini sequins, $95.00. Blue knitted boa, $55.00. Rhinestone jewelry, private collection.

Earth green tweed blazer with
faux green fur collar, $600.00.
Ebony black shirt, $75.00.
Black wool slacks, $125.00.
Striped knit skullcap. $25.00.

Burgundy and gold brocade blazer with
burgundy velvet trim, $125.00.
Gold lamé knit one-shoulder top, $40.00.
Chocolate slacks, $85.00.

CöD Fashions
Dwight Strickland
Fashion Designer/Stylist
PO Box 14614
Atlanta GA 30324

codfashions@yahoo.com

myspace.com/codfashionsllc
codfashions.blogspot.com

Models:
Kendall and Temia

Reflecting on Leadership on World AIDS Day

By Frank J. Oldham, Jr.

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GILEAD
Advancing Therapeutics. Improving Lives.

These times are nearly unimaginable. I grew up in working class Brooklyn, inspired by freedom marches and civil rights. I remember when the first African Americans appeared on television.

Who knew then that we would see the first black man win the Democratic presidential nomination and become the next president of the United States?

Who could predict that an African-American woman would become one of the most influential and wealthy entertainers in the world?

It is our turn to celebrate our successes and to nurture our communities and ourselves. But we must remain focused. While we tackle the world, we must also remain focused on the challenges that strike in our own backyards…discrimination, violence, poverty and poor health care.

One success that continues to elude us is stemming the tide of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently reported that, even though we black people are only 12 percent of the national population, we represent nearly half of all new HIV cases, and the HIV rate is eight times higher among blacks compared to whites. Even more startling, at least one in four blacks with the disease doesn't know they are HIV-positive. We get diagnosed later and die earlier than other racial groups in the United States. This is unacceptable, but it's something we can change.

December 1 is World AIDS Day, a tremendous opportunity to turn the tide of this epidemic in our community. Since 1995, the National Association of People with AIDS has actively campaigned to promote HIV testing, and we have come a long way. Never before have more resources been put into HIV testing for our community. Never before have there been so many options for us. But still, reluctance persists.

I have heard a lot of reasons to avoid taking an HIV test. Some of us don't know where to get the test; some are scared of the results; some don't know who they'd tell or what people might think; some are worried about what to do next; most of us prioritize our own health after everything else is done and everyone else is taken care of. But a regular, yearly HIV test could be the most important thing you do for yourself.

> *"The fact is: It's never been easier to get tested for HIV."*

The fact is: It's never been easier to get tested for HIV. Many places offer the test for free with the option of an oral swab or a finger prick, yielding results in as little as twenty minutes. On our Web site, www.napwa.org, the National Association of People with AIDS offers a simple directory to find local HIV testing sites.

Whether you test positive or negative for HIV, there are things you can do. Talk to your friends and family about the test. If you're negative, you can take steps to stay that way. If you're HIV-positive, there is treatment available. And remember, the earlier you get diagnosed, the better your chances for staying healthy long-term. Early diagnosis makes the difference.

We stand at an important moment: There are many HIV medicines available today that can help keep HIV under control for the long term. In addition, community organizations and health departments provide high quality and confidential support services.

Yes, it is our time. Time to revel in our current success, but also time to take action to ensure our continued success.

So this World AIDS Day, I urge you to follow the fine example set for our community by Barack Obama and Oprah Winfrey. Get tested for HIV. Tell your friends and family to get tested. Offer to go with them, if that's what it takes. Do it for yourself—and for your loved ones.

"Houston, We Have a Problem... ...We've Lost Contact."

By Kevin Anderson

At a time when the country has put a lot of trust into "hope" and "change," I sit here *hoping* that *change* of another kind will soon come. You see, the number of newly infected YMCSMs (Young Men of Color who have Sex with Men) in Houston, Texas continues to rise year after year. As far as I can remember, I have always heard the messages of safe sex: wrap it up/put on a jimmy hat/strap up... and the list goes on. As a 33-year-old man I can honestly say that the words "sex without a condom" do not fit into my vocabulary, but as I listen to the youth around me, it seems to be a most common phrase.

My name is Kevin Anderson and I am an Intervention Coordinator—a health educator working to teach African-American men, ages 16-24, in Houston how to reduce sexual risk. Through my community and social service work, I have had many conversations regarding all kinds of sexual situations and the one thing that I am reminded of daily is that the solution to risk reduction isn't simply wrapping it up. I facilitate an intervention titled "Many Men, Many Voices" which focuses on realities in our lives that may cause risky sexual behaviors. For instance, what happens when the game changes and a partner whispers "I love you" for the first time and then whispers, "just let me put the head in?" These are situations not everyone can navigate successfully. Our program equips young men with the skills needed to make smart and healthy choices in the wake of temptation.

I have found communication can be an extremely powerful tool of transformation. Taking on the responsibility to listen and creating opportunities for the younger brothers to voice their issues has been my method of turning the doorknob of change. Professionally and personally, I have found that providing a safe space to give brothers the opportunity to talk lays a foundation for healing. I have two younger gay brothers. One has struggled with having unprotected sex even though he always had condoms available to him. Over the last year we have been able to break through some of his obstacles with having protected sex through simple communication. I'm twelve years his elder but I allow him the opportunity to hear his own thoughts aloud, thereby slowly opening his door to behavior change. Through our conversations, he realized he didn't feel worthy of being loved, and is now taking steps toward understanding what it is to truly love himself.

I initially questioned whether or not I wanted to take on such a difficult task. I wondered if I could really make a dent in such an enormous epidemic. Then it hit me that HIV is just another obstacle for the black community. Our history has been a path of obstacles: slavery, racism, equal rights and voting rights. Just as determined African Americans like you and I have defeated them, by selflessly working together HIV will also be defeated.

Houston, the fourth largest city in the United States, is no different than any other city when it comes to the amount of newly diagnosed HIV cases, and I am no different than you. Risk reduction begins by simply lending a hand, an ear, and a voice. I don't know about you, but I'd rather go down in history as the brother who helped reduce risk by educating and allowing others to tell their story. And there I begin to plant my seed of change.

Justin's HIV Journal

By Justin B. Smith

In 1999, I joined the U.S. Air Force and it turned out to be one of the best times in my life. I met my partner four years later while still in the military. He was living in Washington, D.C., and I was stationed at Dover AFB, so I moved to be with him. Within two years, my relationship with him would come to its conclusion. After my breakup, my behavior became erratic and out of control. I started doing things that just weren't me. In the later part of 2006 I would often get sick and I didn't know why. I had to call in to work so often that I almost lost my job.

One morning I woke up and got sick five times. I had flu-like symptoms but I didn't feel I had a reason to have the flu. I decided to call my best friend Bryan and have him meet me at Us Helping Us, People Into Living Inc. (UHU). UHU is where people can get tested for HIV in the Washington, D.C. area. They provide services that people with HIV/AIDS need to survive. I felt comfortable being at UHU because I used to work there and still had friends who were employed there.

I arrived before Bryan and decided to go ahead and get tested. I was administered the Orasure test which returns results within twenty minutes. I honestly didn't think I had HIV. I came up with excuses and said things to myself like, "I don't feel sick now, nothing could be wrong with me. I'm 26; I couldn't be HIV-positive." By the time the test was ready I'd smoked about ten cigarettes. I walked back into the HIV testing room and the reader asked me, "Are you ready to hear your results, Mr. Smith?" I said, "Yes I am." She said, "Mr. Smith, you've tested positive for the HIV virus."

I was devastated. I couldn't believe I was positive. The first thing I thought was that I couldn't have any children. My second thought was what I would tell my parents—they would be destroyed. Then my final thought was, "I'm going to die."

Bryan arrived at the clinic and saw it in my eyes. He held me tight as I wept in his arms. Bryan and I then went to the bar to decide what my next steps would be. I decided to fight—fight to stay alive.

When I told my parents they handled it the way any parents can handle their son telling them he has HIV, but my father and mother are strong. I told them, "Don't cry for me. Be strong with me."

After about two and a half years of being HIV-positive, I was forced to go on meds after my T-cell count lowered to 261 and viral load reached 77,000.

Currently, I am in a polyamorous relationship and all my family and friends know about my status. They have given me the love and strength to help me through this journey and to create this video journal.

This journal is to tell people that being HIV-positive is not a piece of cake. People need to know what they might endure if they put themselves at risk. HIV is neither glamorous nor a rite of passage. Watch the journal and think twice. In the words of Pedro Zamora, "I'm not dying. I'm living with it."

View Justin's HIV Journal at www.youtube.com/jsmithco98.

EVENTS FOR US

Heroes in the Struggle
This year, the Black AIDS Institute will host its "Heroes in the Struggle" awards gala in both New York City, on December 1, 2008 (World AIDS Day) at Jazz at Lincoln Center, and in Los Angeles on February 4, 2009 (right before National Black AIDS Awareness Day) at Walt Disney Concert Hall. "Heroes in the Struggle" is a photographic tribute to African Americans who have made outstanding contributions to the fight against HIV/AIDS. Since its debut in 2001, the exhibit has traveled around the country, raising awareness, challenging individuals and institutions to get involved in their communities, and generating critical conversation about HIV testing and treatment.
www.blackaids.org

Party with a Purpose '08
Join Purpose Driven Lives, Inc. for their 3rd Annual toy drive holiday celebration to enhance the lives of those in need. Party with a Purpose '08 will be held from 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. Saturday, December 6, 2008 at 2524 McKinney St., Houston, TX 77003. Attire: dressy-casual in red and black. An unwrapped gift for a child (infant -16 years) or a $10 donation is required.
purposedrivenlives@yahoo.com

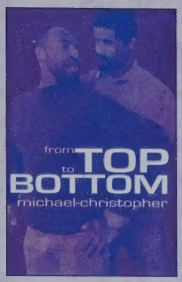
2009 Presidential Inaugural Festivities
The "Obama-nation" officially kicks off on on January 20, 2009 with a historical week of events including the official swearing-in ceremony, inaugural address, parade and a host of receptions, parties, balls and galas.
http://inaugural.senate.gov

Winter Explosion 2009
Heat up the slopes at the 15th annual Winter Explosion February 13-16, 2009. Founded in 1995, this event has evolved into the largest and longest-running black LGBT winter getaway. Guests experience an array of activities including educational seminars and workshops, skiing and snowboarding, dance parties, film screenings, a fashion show, an indoor pool beach party, a poetry slam, talent showcases, a worship service and even a vendor's marketplace. This year's event features a live performance by American Idol, Fantasia, and one of Broadway's newest starlets, Elisabeth Withers (*Color Purple*).
www.winterexplosion.com

In the Life Celebration
The Zuna Institute is planning its second annual "In the Life" celebration slated for this February 20-22, 2009 in Los Angeles.
www.zunainstitute.org or **www.myspace.com/soulpurposeaz**

In 2006, MICHAEL-CHRISTOPHER
rocked the community with his best selling novel...

FROM TOP TO BOTTOM



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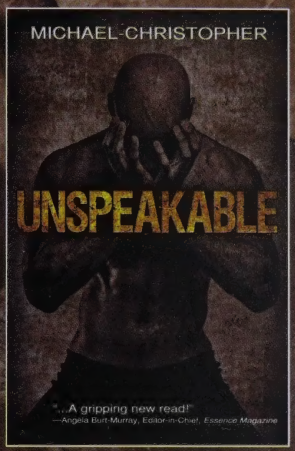

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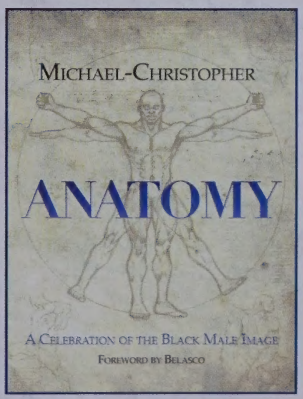

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